

Leicester, Mass. May 18. '61.

Dear Mr. Webb,

I make an end to-day of the Extracts from John Brown's Letters in my hands. Much more, of a similar character, I might send you; but that which I have sent will sufficiently reveal the Man, his Motives, & Purposes. Some things I have forbore to copy, as possibly too local & minute; - others, because ~~without~~ doubting the expediency of copying many names. - If he ever wrote any full accounts of his field-action, they have been withdrawn from the Letters in this collection; but I doubt if he ever did. He was a wonderfully thoughtful, careful, & sagacious old man. Beside his letters, he has copied for you one of his daughter Ruth's to him, and one of his son Oliver's (to his mother) written not long previous to the Attack at Harper's Ferry;



also, a Statement by John Brown of his  
Reception, with his Eleven Slaves from  
Missouri, at a town in Iowa, Feb. 1859.

I do not get yet the account of  
the Family Circumstances expected from  
Mr. Stearns; nor the copy of a letter  
which I sent to Rev. Mr. Furness of Phil<sup>a</sup>  
after. Perhaps Mr. F. will send it  
direct to you. Whatever further I get  
for you, I will lose no time in sending  
forward.

You will make what use you think  
best of these copies I send, and use your  
judgment as to the omission of any  
portion. I think I have sent nothing  
which may not be safely published;  
but, as to that too, you will please exercise



your discretion.

In my last note I spoke of  
Henry Thompson, the husband of  
Rueth, as having been killed at  
Harper's Ferry. I was mistaken.  
It was William Thompson who was  
killed there - most inhumanly  
& infernally murdered, after he  
was made a prisoner, & being  
unarmed & defenceless. - Henry  
Thompson was badly wounded at  
the "Battle of Black Jack" in 1856.

Hoping that you have duly  
rec'd my recent communications,  
April 16, May 3, May 13, May 21, (~~May 28~~)  
and that this will reach you seasonably,  
and with truest regards, I remain  
Yours, ever S. May Jr



indescribable

P.S. It is time of mail-closing  
and I have no time for a word  
on affairs here. But the papers  
will tell you the history of the  
"War for the Union", as the Tribune  
calls it. If I believed it was  
a War for no more than that, I  
should have no interest in it, indeed  
would pray for its failure. What  
Union can there ever be again  
(there never was much) between  
the Northern & the Slaveholding  
States of this Republic. — I trust  
that this War is to lay the axe at the  
Root of the Tree of Slavery. If it does  
not, it is Time, Treasure, Labour, Life  
— all wasted, & worse than wasted.